# City of Pleasant Hill

## City Wide Design Guidelines 2008

## Residential Guidelines

Adopted by City of Pleasant Hill City Council Resolution No. 08-08

Please note that these Guidelines must be used in conjunction with the
City of Pleasant Hill Zoning Ordinance and General Plan

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# I. INTRODUCTION

The City of Pleasant Hill incorporated as a City in 1961. Its history goes further back than that, as it was farmland and orchards before residential and commercial uses started to spring up. Over the course of many years, the City has developed into many distinctive neighborhoods and areas, with different characteristics. In part, Design Guidelines help to ensure that these areas of the city maintain their character while allowing updates that will keep things current. Through the use of Design Guidelines, the City can help to ensure that future development will occur in ways that will enhance and contribute to the overall appearance of the City.

## A. Purpose of City-Wide Design Guidelines

These Design Guidelines are intended to inspire thoughtful interpretation and response to design opportunities, while promoting and reinforcing the physical image of residential and commercial areas of the City of Pleasant Hill. The Design Guidelines are not intended to replace or establish new requirements for the Zoning Ordinance, for the General Plan or public work standards, all of which contain requirements that must be adhered to when designing projects. However, the Guidelines are intended to encourage quality, well designed development throughout Pleasant Hill that enhances existing neighborhoods, creates identity, and improves the overall quality of life within the City. The Guidelines are intended to promote a desired level of future development in Pleasant Hill that:

1. Preserve the sense of a small-scale, small-town community and maintain the surrounding environment;
2. Contributes to a positive physical image and identity, and preserves the surrounding environment;
3. Provide design assistance to the development community, architects/designers and property owners;
4. Promote high-quality development that stimulates investment in and strengthening of the economic vitality of all areas of Pleasant Hill;
5. Facilitate the development of projects that establish a sense of place while complementing the character of traditional design established within the existing neighborhood and the City;
6. Implement the goals, objectives, and policies of the Pleasant Hill General Plan;
7. Maintain and enhance property values and pride of ownership.

The Residential Guidelines are meant for use by homeowners, developers, and architects in achieving a superior quality design of new construction and additions to existing buildings. The Guidelines do not seek to impose an overriding style, colors or theme. The goal of the Guidelines is to promote quality designs that have been carefully considered that have well integrated building features and architectural elements. These Guidelines complement required development standards per the City's Zoning Code. These Guidelines will be revised in the future as policy, technology and techniques evolve.

## B. Design Principles and Considerations

The following are the main design principles of the City Wide Design Guidelines. All of the individual design components provided in the document ultimately support the following principles:

1. Aesthetics – High quality design composition and details to enhance an existing site and surrounding neighborhood
2. Scale – Relationship between the human experience and the built and natural environment
3. Context – Design related to the surrounding environment
4. Pattern – Composition of design and functional elements with the neighborhood
5. Massing – Design of structures related to surrounding structures to provide optimal visual harmony
6. Topography – Relationship of the structure to the existing site topography.
7. Circulation/Connectivity – Pedestrian, bicycle, auto and other connections within neighborhoods and the City
8. Climate – Design to respond to the local climate and seasonal changes, through the use of passive and active solutions towards energy conservation.
9. Water Conservation – Landscape and site planning to more efficiently use water and reduce runoff
10. Sustainability – Short and long-term impacts to reduce maintenance/repair while extending the useful life.
11. Environmental Sensitivity – Incorporate design solutions and materials that will preserve natural resources.
12. Open Space – Incorporate development that maintains and creates open spaces.

## C. How to Use the Design Guidelines

### *1. General*

These Guidelines are intended to be used to generally influence the design of development/redevelopment of land uses throughout the City. The Guidelines are a policy document that guide development in Pleasant Hill. The Pleasant Hill General Plan defines the community vision and establishes a framework to guide decision-making about development, land use, resource management, public safety, public services, and general community well being. Both the Pleasant Hill Zoning Code and City-Wide Design Guidelines are implementing tools of the General Plan and are applicable to new projects or improvements to existing projects (remodels and renovations).

These Guidelines should be used as a starting point for the creative design process and should not be looked upon as the only solution for design. Owners should strive to be creative and innovative and should look beyond plain or disjointed architectural and landscape treatments.

While the Design Guidelines incorporate specific design recommendations, the designer should incorporate recommendations while keeping in mind the needs of their specific project. Single design recommendations should not be incorporated into proposals for the sole purpose of satisfying a guideline, its impact on the larger project design should also be considered to ensure degradation is not occurring to the overall project.

### *2. Relationship to Design Review Process*

The Design Guidelines are meant to be utilized prior to beginning the design review process. The Guidelines should be used during the initial design stage before plans are submitted to the City for Architectural Review Commission ("ARC") review. Once submitted for review, the City Planning Staff will review the project and will work with the applicant to refine the project proposal by providing design input and recommendations that will ultimately be forwarded to the ARC. Incorporating components of Design Guidelines do not guarantee an approved project. However, the project will be viewed more favorably when reviewed by the City.

During the design stage, the Guidelines should be used to encourage the highest level of design quality, while providing flexibility to foster creativity for projects in response to existing conditions. A study session can be requested before the City's ARC to receive preliminary feedback.

While projects should be designed to incorporate many of the design recommendations provided in the pages to follow, above all else, the City's design review process will always encourage any project that contains superior design solutions. The Design Guidelines are not meant to suppress creative, new and innovative design, but meant to support achieving good design.

Lastly, a successful project can also be impacted by the level, skill and talent of the designer who creates the proposal and the craftsmen that construct the project. This means having plans prepared by a licensed professional, having a complete design application submitted to the City, and hiring a professional and competent construction team.

## D. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

The following are frequently asked questions that users may have when designing a project.

**1.** ***What is the purpose of this document?***
The purpose of this document is to provide design guidance and direction to those proposing residential development applications to the City.

**2.** ***When should I use these Guidelines?***
These Guidelines should be used for any project that incorporates physical changes to a property. This can range from the smallest building addition or landscape change to a large apartment complex. In addition, the Guidelines should be used during the early stages of the design process.

**3.** ***How is the best way to use these Guidelines for my project?***
Since the document is separated into different topics and sections, the first step is to identify what kind of project you are working on (i.e. single family residential, multi-family residential, etc.) and refer to the relevant section of the Design Guidelines document. In addition, while there are many recommendations in the document, it is not always beneficial or possible to incorporate all of them into your project. The preferred option would be to incorporate recommendations that relate and improve your project.

**4.** ***Are these Guidelines required?***
The Design Guidelines reflect the policies of the General Plan. While no individual guideline is specifically required of any project, the Guidelines collectively are presented to assist the designer in making a proposal that is consistent with the General Plan. In addition, since these Guidelines are endorsed by the City it is expected that if the project incorporates design recommendations that improve the project, it will receive a higher level of support.

**5.** ***Are these Guidelines relevant to my small project?***
Yes. There are design recommendations that can be incorporated into the smallest building addition, new fence or landscape change. For example, a small building addition could incorporate a design recommendation to include an awning or provide a complementary roof and material design that will match the remainder of the structure, or a landscape modification could include a deciduous tree that is planted on the south end of the home to help provide shade during the warm summer months, but allow sunlight to come through during the cooler winter months.

**6.** ***This document contains a lot of information, where do I begin?***
The document is broken up into different sections. If you are a homeowner, a good place to begin would be within the single family residential portion of the document. If there are specific issues that you are struggling with, there is a table of contents that will help to direct you. For example, if you are looking at doing landscape changes, there are landscape guidelines for single family residential and that would be the appropriate location to begin.

**7.** ***Do I have to incorporate every design component mentioned?***
Design components that are relevant to your project and not implement those that may have a negative impact on the larger design of the project proposal. It should be noted that not every design recommendation is applicable to all projects.

**8.** ***What is the difference between "shall" and "should" when used in the Guidelines?***
When "shall" is used in the document, it is in reference to Guidelines that are ordinance requirements in the Municipal Code and does not have flexibility in its usage. "Shall" Guidelines *are* requirements. When "should" is used in the document, this references a guideline that is recommended to be incorporated into the project proposal. "Should" Guidelines *are not* requirements.

**9.** ***If I use the recommendations contained in the Design Guideline document, does this mean an automatic approval of my proposal?***
No, however, it will put your project in a better position to be approved by the City if the project incorporates design components that are recommended by the City.

**10.** ***What are the benefits of using these Guidelines?***
The benefits include a potentially improved design, potential energy cost saving, or less long-term maintenance. In addition, using the recommendations contained in the Design Guidelines document could result in higher level of support from the City.

**11.** ***Is there anything else that I need to know?***
Don't forget that there are Building Codes and Zoning Ordinances that must be followed. These Guidelines are meant for design purposes and to provide additional information that goes beyond the hard and fast requirements and regulations of the Building Code and Zoning Ordinance. Additional information on the Building Code is available through the City's Building Division and information on the Zoning Ordinance is available through the Planning Division.

## E. Organization

The Guidelines are organized in sections according to the following categories:

1. Single-Family Residential
2. Multi-Family Residential
3. Streetscape and Gateways

Topics include site planning, building massing and scale, architecture and appearance, landscape, fences and walls, open space, utilities, circulation, and streetscape design.

***Graphics and photos are provided throughout the document to provide the reader a greater understanding of the specific Design Guideline. Graphics and photos are provided for illustrative purposes of a specific guideline and not necessarily represent an overall design preference (i.e. a photo describing a specific roof style does not also represent a City preference for related architecture, building size, or landscaping).***

# Single Family Residential

# II. RESIDENTIAL

## A. Single-Family Residential

Single-family residential uses are lots or parcels containing single-family detached units or attached housing (such as a duet or duplex).

### *1. Single-Family Site Planning*

Structure/home location of a building on its lot has an impact on the site and on user functionality of the building and its interplay between building and site. Location and appearance of the site entry is critical to the image of a home, either by reinforcing the architecture of the building or breaking down the appearance.

a. To enhance the character of the development, the layout should preserve existing natural site features such as topography, views, and vegetation. Public views of such features should be preserved and incorporated into development proposals.

b. Integrate new single-family residential developments into the surrounding environment. Find a balance between new and older homes that respects both interests.

c. A walkway from the front door to the street can be welcoming.

d. New dwellings should have a strong relationship to the street.

e. Set back garages or de-emphasize garages from the front of the dwelling. (see fig. 1.e,f)

f. Encourage variable setbacks for front facing elevations of homes and garages to create a visually interesting streetscape.

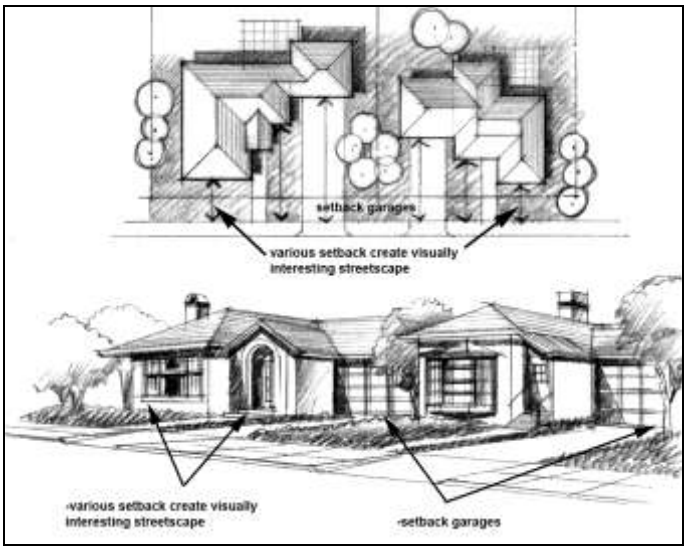
(see fig. 1.e,f)

g. Site plan designs should take into account position regarding sun patterns and similar impacts to onsite and adjacent buildings. Buildings should not be sited to obstruct one another.

(see fig. 1.g)

h. Design and orient buildings so that sunlight directly enters the home during some part of the day year round.

i. Direct line-of-site between dwelling units, specifically bedrooms and bathrooms should be minimized.




figs. 1.e,f

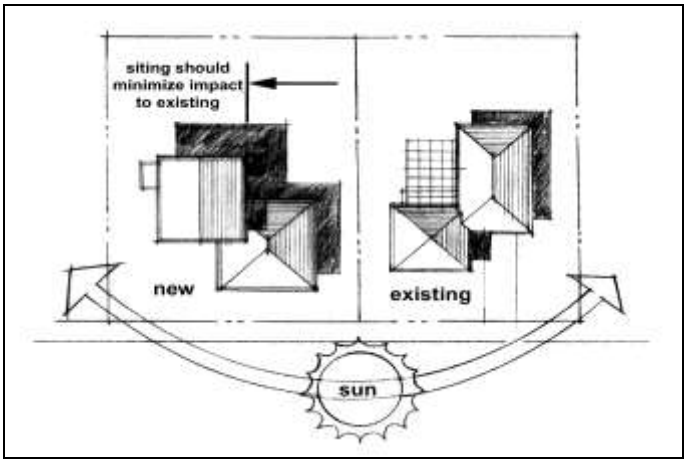



fig. 1.g ***(Graphics and Photos are provided for illustrative purposes only)***

j. New homes should minimize the loss of existing mature trees on-site, through the use of thoughtful and creative design.

(i) Removal of existing heritage or protected trees shall be limited to circumstances where the tree is dead or dying, poses a life/safety hazard, in situations that renders the site undevelopable, or in other exception cases as noted Pleasant Hill Municipal Code (PHMC) Section 18.50.110.

(ii) Any loss of heritage or protected trees requires an arborist report as part of the project request and submitted to the City for peer review.

(iii) Encroachment into existing tree canopies should be minimized.

(iv) Any encroachment into/beneath a tree canopy will require an arborist report to ensure that new construction does not negatively impact the long-term survivability of the tree.

(v) Balance the needs of the property owner with the City's goals of mature tree preservation.

Trees are determined to be mature based on different standards including species, health, and age of tree.

k. New two story homes or additions, when adjacent to single family dwellings, should transition appropriately to respect the privacy of adjacent single-story buildings.

(see fig. 1.k)


fig. 1.k

l. New homes and building additions should be sensitive to existing structures and minimize obstruction of existing outward views where possible.

m. Projects should be designed to minimize impervious surfaces and incorporate landscape elements to reduce runoff. Pervious pavements can help to reduce runoff.

n. Urban Creek Guidelines (A new creek setback ordinance is currently being developed by the City)

(i) A larger setback should be provided for structures when located near deeper creeks.

(ii) Development adjacent to creeks should minimize impacts to existing drainage facilities

- Proposed improvements should not diminish the capacity of the creek.
- Proposed improvements should not increase flooding potential.
    - Runoff should be detained on-site prior to discharge into the creek
- Proposed improvements should not cause in increase in erosion or cause instability of the creek banks
    - Outfalls to creeks should minimize creek erosion.

(iii) Development adjacent to creeks should minimize impacts to the riparian habitat

- Improvements should be kept away from riparian corridors.

(iv) Improvements within creeks should be limited to outfalls, infrastructure improvements, and landscaping approved by local, state and regional agencies.

(v) Creek stabilization should incorporate soil bio-engineering and plant-based methods.

(vi) Creek improvements should require minimal maintenance.

- Access for the maintenance and monitoring of creeks should be provided.

(vii) Improvements within creeks should be designed for longevity.

### *2. Scale and Mass*

The size and scale of a new structure should relate to the scale of other buildings in the immediate neighborhood, thus, creating visual unity. The following Design Guidelines apply to scale and mass of single-family residences.

a. Architectural elements of new residential buildings should be designed to reduce the mass of large structures and provide a pedestrian scale to the buildings.

b. The scale and mass of new single-family residential buildings or additions should be harmonious and visually compatible with the physical condition of the existing neighborhoods.

c. The scale and mass of new infill buildings should transition appropriately to the street and adjacent smaller structures.

(see fig. 2.c)

d. Rooflines and pitch of new residential buildings and additions should be harmonious and consistent with the building as well as to surrounding development.

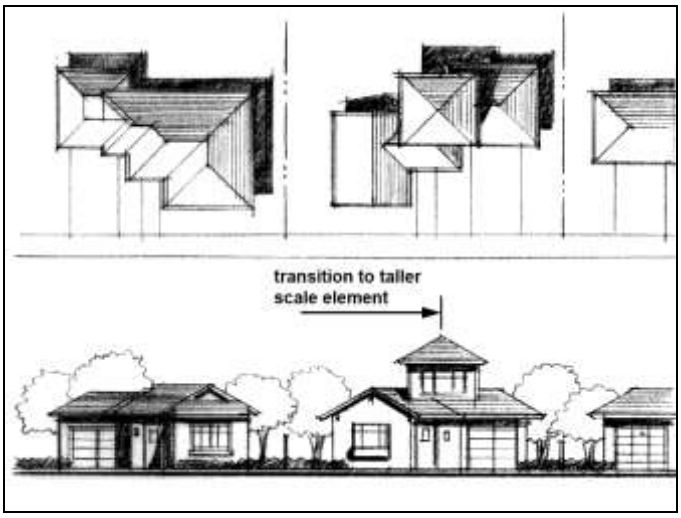



fig. 2.c

e. The scale of the building should relate to the pedestrian with complementary ground floor elements including, but not limited to, canopies, porches, awnings and through the use of varied pavement surfaces. (see fig. 2.e)

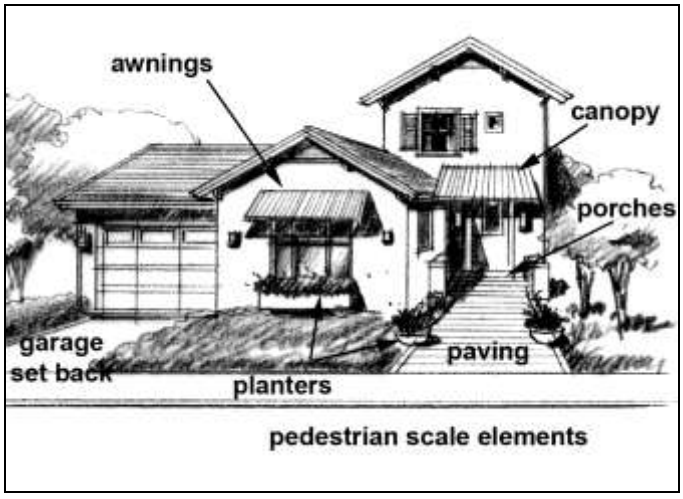



fig. 2.e

### *3. Building Architecture and Appearance*

It is sometimes the little details that are often ignored that can elevate the appearance of a home from good to great. It is the desire of the city to not have plain/undistinguished buildings, rather to encourage interesting details that are the hallmark of great neighborhoods.

a. New homes should convey a small-town feel, emphasizing the pedestrian scale and entrance over the vehicular, stepping back two-story buildings from the street, and visually breaking up facades into smaller components.

b. Individual expression is encouraged while still maintaining balance with the surrounding neighborhood.

c. Buildings should be designed to reinforce the relationship to streets.

   (i) This can be accomplished through the use of front porches and windows at the front of the building

   (see fig. 3.c.(i)

   (ii) De-emphasize the garage through the use of side access garages, stepping it back from the main building facade, being located at the rear, etc.

fig. 3.c.(i)

d. Structures should be visually and architecturally pleasing by varying the height, color, setback, materials, texture, trim and roof shape, and landscape.

e. Facades should be varied and articulated to provide visual interest to the street and pedestrians.

f. Buildings should include architectural details that may include, but not limited to: porches, bay windows, balconies, railings, fascia boards and trim to enhance the character of the building. (see fig. 3.f)

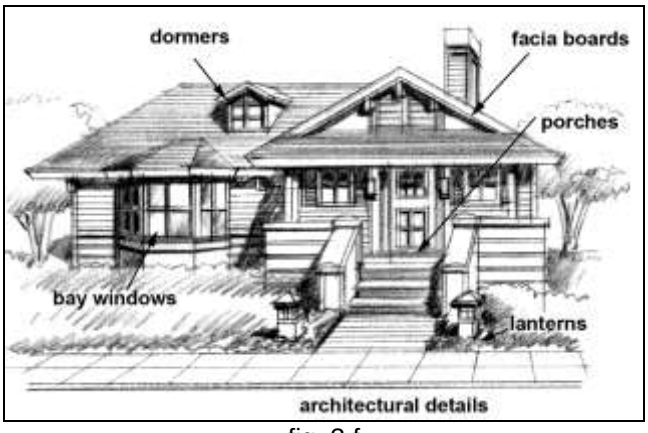


fig. 3.f

g. Building materials and colors should enhance the neighborhood and be compatible to the neighborhood.

   (i) Colors should be carefully selected to complement the overall design composition.

(ii) To help reduce the appearance of bulk, building body colors should be lighter than trim colors

h. No building facade should consist of an unarticulated blank wall or an unbroken series of doors.

i. Recessed windows should be used where appropriate.

j. Architecture should treat the structure entirely and finish appropriately on all sides of the building to provide continuity. (see fig. 3.j)

k. For most architectural styles, the number of colors on the exterior should be minimized with additional contrasting color for accents.


fig. 3.j

l. Building additions/renovations should blend with the remainder of the building and not appear “added” on.

m. Building Accessories

(i) High quality doors and windows should be used with style and placement that is consistent with the architectural design of the building.

(ii) Building features, such as lighting fixtures, mailboxes, address numbers should be placed with care.

(iii) Shutters and vents placed, sized, scaled to the building.

n. Roofs (see fig. 3.n)

fig. 3.n

(i) Roof materials should relate to the design and architectural style of the building.

(ii) Roofs materials should have texture and relief.

### *4. Landscaping*

Landscaping is an integral component of any project. Landscaping should complement good architectural design and help create a finished project. The following Design Guidelines apply to landscaping for single-family residences.

a. Landscaping should be an integral part of the overall site design. (see fig. 4.a)

b. Landscaping should be used to complement good design, not hide substandard architecture.

c. Select landscape materials and plants that are appropriate in scale and function with the site and for the site conditions.

fig. 4.a

d. Heritage and protected trees shall be preserved for the community's enjoyment subject to Pleasant Hill Municipal Code (PHMC) Section 18.50.110.

   (i) Heritage trees are defined as any tree in the City with a trunk diameter of 16 inches or more or any tree grouping in the City with at least one tree of this diameter. (per Municipal Code Section 18.50.110.E.).

   (ii) Protected trees are identified as a native or indigenous tree with a trunk diameter 12 inches or greater at a height of 2 feet from the ground, or any non-native tree with a trunk diameter greater than 24 inches at a height of 2 feet from the ground (per Municipal Code Section 18.50.110.A.).

e. Existing heritage and protected trees shall be preserved to the greatest extent possible as per PHMC Section 18.50.110. In addition, the loss of mature trees shall be minimized where possible.

   (i) Removal of existing heritage and protected trees shall be limited to circumstances where the tree is dead or dying, poses a life/safety hazard,in cases that renders the site not developable, or in other exception cases as noted in PHMC Section 18.50.110.

   (ii) New structures shall be designed to avoid conflict with existing heritage and protected trees where possible.

   (iii) Any loss of heritage or protected trees require an arborist report as part of the project request and shall be peer reviewed for accuracy by the City.

   (iv) Replacement of removed trees should be replaced at a higher ratio than the number removed. In addition, native and indigenous trees should be replaced with like trees, while non-native trees may be replaced by a broader palette of tree species.

f. Plant material should be sited to respect lighting and allow emergency apparatus access. Trees and large shrubs should be sited to avoid potential damage to overhead lines or underground utilities.

g. Trees should be sited to respect solar access to photovoltaic (PV) facilities.

h. In areas of natural predominance trees should be planted in a random manner where possible. (see fig. 4.h)

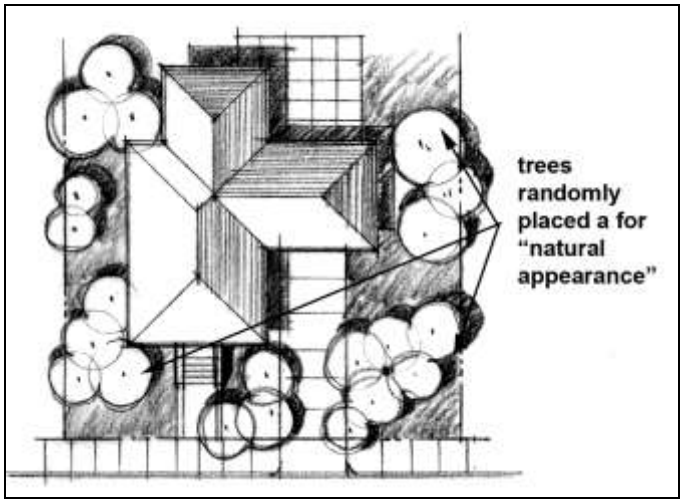



fig. 4.h

i. Native, drought tolerant plant materials and other plant species which are well adapted to local climatic conditions can preserve water resources.

j. To provide for better fire protection, landscape plans for properties in close proximity to open space areas should reflect the Contra Costa County Fire Protection District's Guidelines for "Defensible Space."

k. Landscape plans should maximize the use of shade (deciduous) trees to provide cooling during the warm summer season. (see fig. 4.k)


fig. 4.k

l. Deciduous trees should be planted 20'-40' apart on the south and west side of buildings for maximum solar protection during the summer and gain during the winter. (see fig. 4.l)

m. The scale and nature of landscaping materials should be appropriate to the site, structures, and neighborhood.


fig. 4.l

n. When selecting plant materials, the following Design Guidelines should be followed:

(i) When replacing existing mature trees, new trees should be 36-48 inch box size to quickly replace the lost tree canopy or smaller trees should be planted in numbers that replace the lost tree canopy.

(ii) Trees species and sizes should be selected that best fits the planting areas.

(iii) Shrubs species and sizes should be selected that best fits the planting environment.

(iv) Ground cover should be planted using spacing and sizes that will accomplish ground coverage within a short amount of time.

o. Landscaping should avoid creating a green wall of vegetation (typically greater than three feet in height) at the front yard.

p. Hardscape should be minimized in the front yard.

(i) At least 50% of the front yard shall have live landscaping (PHMC Section 18.20.040.G.).

q. Air conditioning/mechanical equipment and trash enclosures/receptacles shall be placed out of view from the public right-of-way through the use of landscaping or walls/fences (PHMC Section 19.50.090).

(i) Where possible, air conditioning and mechanical equipment should be located on the north and east sides to minimize stress on the systems during warmer months.

r. Landscaping should be selected and planted in a way that will avoid costly and repeated maintenance and discourages weeds and other invasive growth from affecting the original landscape plan.

s. Sight distance zones (PHMC Section 18.50.100 ) shall not have any landscaping over three feet tall.

### *5. Fences and Walls*

Fences and walls are often used to delineate property boundaries. Good design of fences and walls can add to the appearance of the property while affording the privacy that owner's desire.

a. The design of fences and walls should be architecturally compatible with the primary structure. (see fig. 5.a)


fig. 5.a

b. Front yard fences should have a transparent appearance, such as the use of picket, rail, grid or wire type of fencing. (Chain-link fences are discouraged.)

c. The design of fences and walls in the front yard should create a visual openness. Fences and walls that isolate the front of the dwelling from the streetscape are strongly discouraged.

d. Vehicular gates are discouraged.

e. Vertical elements, fence height changes or change in plane should be incorporated into the design of fences and walls especially for long runs.

f. Landscaping should be used as part of the design of the fence or wall to soften and screen large masses of blank wall surface area.

g. Fences and walls taller than 3 feet are prohibited in all vision triangles (street corners and driveway entrances) – see Fencing Guidelines, Section 18.20.040H of the Zoning Ordinance.

h. Fences, walls and other landscape structures are prohibited in the public right-of-way.

i. To keep scenic corridors in its natural appearance the use of walls and fences should be minimized to preserve scenic corridors along designated corridors.

### *6. Lighting*

Lighting in single-family neighborhoods can add to the appearance of a home through accent lights, but can also negatively impact a site and the surrounding environment with too much light that may cause light spillage and glare.

a. Lighting should be provided in balance with neighborhood concerns.

b. Lighting should be located and designed to minimize glare and spillage onto adjacent properties. (see fig. 6.b)

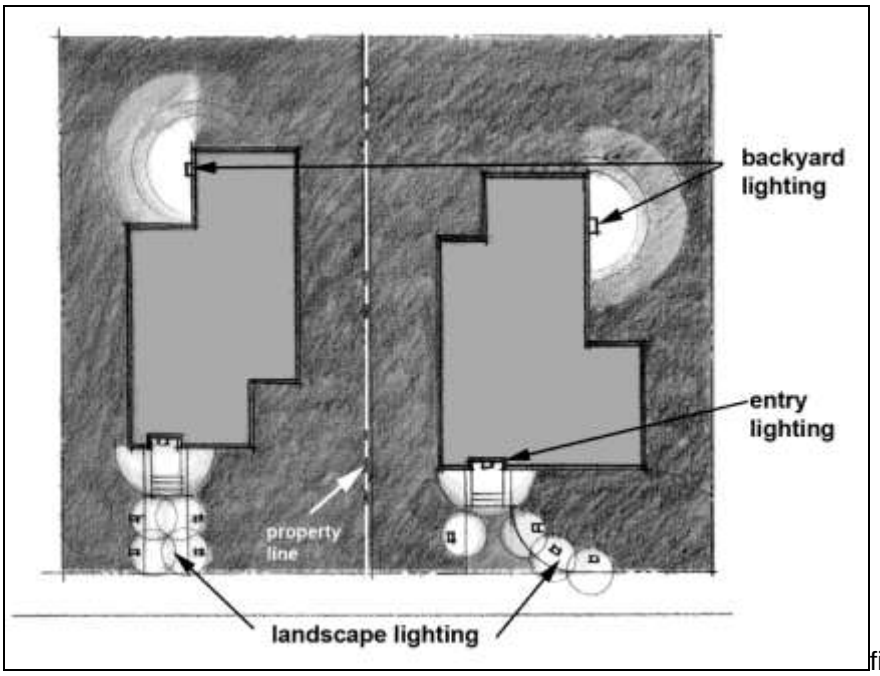


fig. 6.b

c. Lighting should be used for accent, not attract attention to a site.

d. Light fixtures should be compatible, in-scale, and placed appropriately on the building.

e. Each situation is different as the effect of accent lighting may be minimized due to the existing built environment.

### *7. Infill-Single Family Residential*

Larger homes and additions are becoming more common in the City. Many are located in older neighborhoods, which were developed at a time when smaller homes were common and styles were more modest in their outward appearance. Larger homes should not be allowed to overwhelm their neighbors and maintain the neighborhood context. The general scale and character of the neighborhood should be respected.

The following are Design Guidelines with respect to infill development.

a. Design Principles

(i) Reinforce prevailing neighborhood home orientation and entry patterns.

(ii) Respect the scale and character of homes in the neighborhood.

(iii) Design homes to respect their immediate neighbors.

(iv) Preserve mature landscaping.

b. Design Techniques

(i) Utilization of similar roof forms and pitches.

(ii) Use of similar scale entries.

(iii) Keeping first floor eave heights similar to neighboring homes

(iv) Use first floor roof elements to break up two story walls. (see fig. 7.b (iv))

(v) Limiting second floor area and volume.


fig. 7.b (iv)

(vi) Setting back second floor walls from first floor walls below. (see fig. 7.b(vi))


fig. 7.b(vi)

(vii) Design windows that are harmonious and respect the character of the neighborhood.

(viii) New homes and additions to existing structures should be located to minimize blockage of sun access to living spaces and actively used outdoor areas of adjacent homes. (see fig. 7.b(viii))

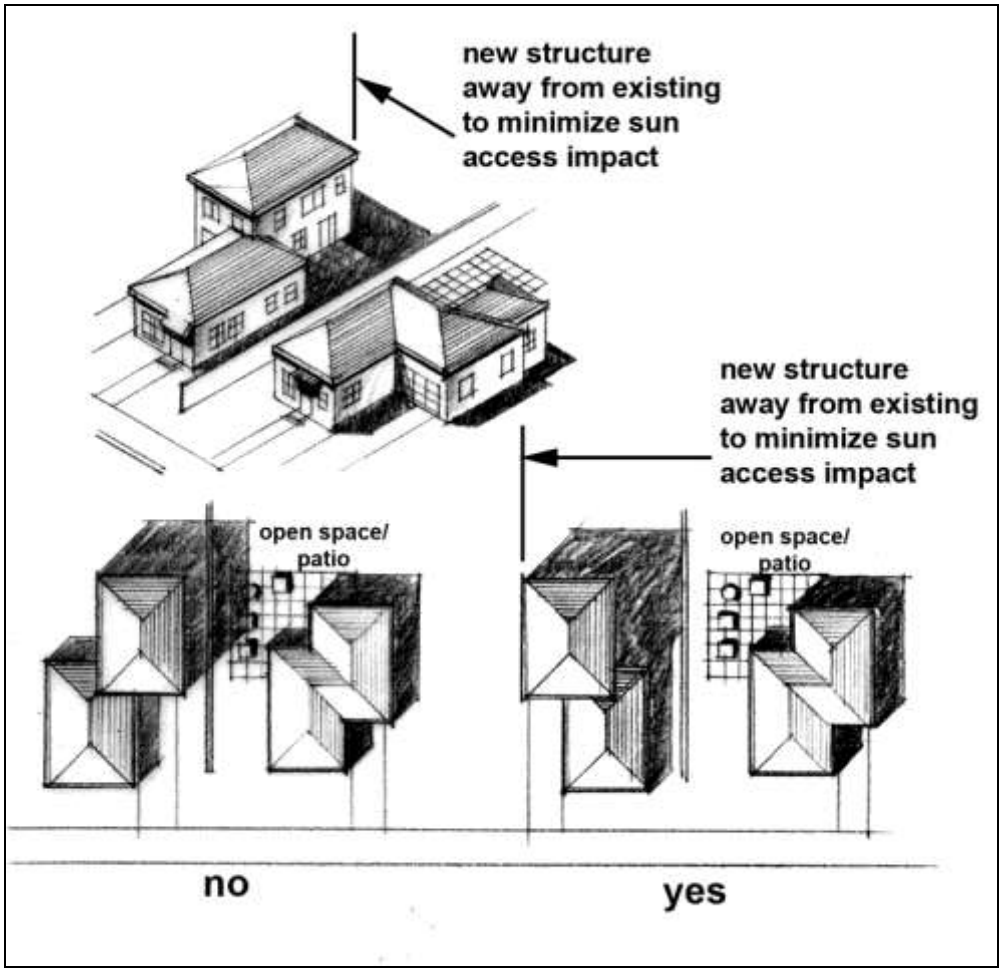



fig. 7.b(viii)

(ix) Second floor balconies and decks should respect the privacy of adjacent neighbors.

(x) Second floor windows should be designed to preserve the privacy of adjacent properties where possible.

(xi) New development should be considerate of existing outward views.

While development preferences and style changes over time, change evolves and occurs gradually, thus, drastic changes from the existing environment cannot always be supported.

### *8. Subdivisions*

New residential subdivisions are an opportunity to develop large pieces of property. The goal should be to set a framework for the entire area that creates a sense of community and preserves the surrounding environment. Designs for new subdivisions should provide high-quality site, architectural and landscape design plans that promote a sense of community. Site planning of new subdivisions should link the subdivision's various components to each other. In addition to the other Design Guidelines, the following are specific to new single-family residential subdivisions:

a. Existing mature trees shall be preserved on-site to the greatest extent possible to maintain the City's existing urban forest.

   (i) Removal of existing heritage or protected trees shall be limited to circumstances where the tree is dead or dying, poses a life/safety hazard, in situations that renders the site undevelopable, or in other exception cases as noted in Pleasant Hill Municipal Code (PHMC) Section 18.50.110.

   - Any loss of mature trees require an arborist report as part of the project request and shall be peer reviewed for accuracy by the City.

   (ii) Buildings and roadways shall be sited to save as many mature trees as possible.

   (iii) When mature trees are removed, the amount of replacement trees should be adequate to replace the lost canopy.

   (iv) Incorporate tree protection measures to save significant sized trees.

   (v) Incorporate designs that ensure the long-term longevity of trees.

b. The circulation system should be logical, predictable and not confusing. Streets should connect to adjacent neighborhoods to provide access to schools, parks, and community centers.

   (i) Pedestrian paths, trails, etc. should be provided throughout the entire community without dead ends.

c. New streets (public and private) shall meet all City standards (as per Public Works Standards).

   (i) Non-arterial streets should minimize width to the greatest extent possible.

   (ii) New streets should be designed to accommodate alternative modes of transportation.

   (iii) Connect to the existing street network

d. Sidewalks shall be incorporated as per Public Works Standards.

e. Street patterns that create long uninterrupted walls at the property line should be avoided.

f. Traffic calming devices can be incorporated into the project on a case-by-case basis.

g. Varied front yard setbacks (as allowed by the Zoning Code) should be used throughout the subdivision. (see fig. 8.g)

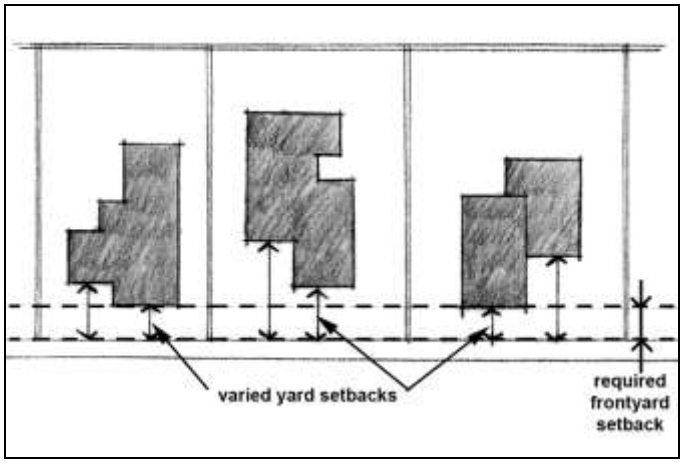



fig. 8.g

h. Corner lots should be bigger than inside lots to avoid penalizing development of the lots.

i. Mass grading shall be minimized, especially in hillside areas, to the greatest extent possible and as per PHMC Section 18.35.040.B.).

j. Subdivisions that back up to non-residential uses and arterial streets shall incorporate landscape buffers, fencing, or deeper yards to mitigate potential noise, aesthetics and land use compatibility impacts to the greatest extent possible.

k. Homes should employ varying color combinations and architecture to provide variety within the subdivision. Three different models/architectural packages are should be submitted for subdivisions.

l. New subdivisions should physically connect to adjacent neighborhoods.

m. Lighting should be sited appropriately to enhance a projects appearance and for safety reasons.

(i) Use alternative fixtures/luminares for illumination rather than typical street lights including pedestrian scale lighting where appropriate. (see fig. 8.m(i))

(ii) Public street lighting fixtures shall be approved by the City prior to installation.

(iii) Minimize night sky pollution.


fig. 8.m(i)

n. Landscaping

(i) Visual focal points such as fountains, sculpture and public art are strongly encouraged in larger subdivisions. (see fig. 8.n(i))

fig. 8.n(i)

(ii) Design and material elements of walls and fences should be consistent in style throughout the subdivision.

o. Open space areas should have easy access, clear visibility, and not hidden by buildings and structures.

p. Provide adequate visitor parking.

### *9. Hillside Residential*

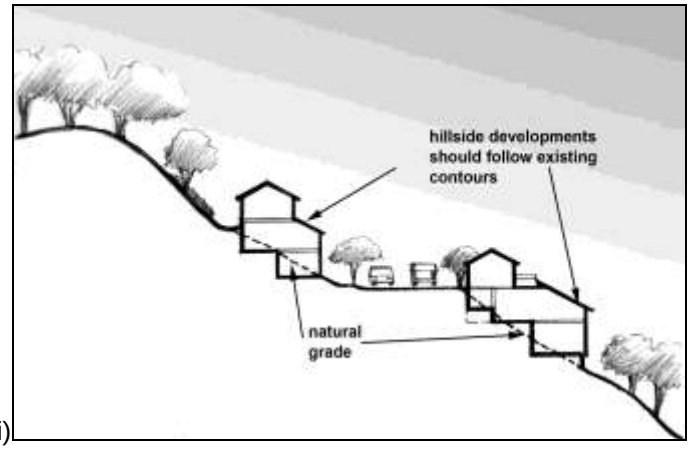
Hillside areas of the City (areas that have an average slope of greater than 15%) include unique features, scenic views, and the sloping topography. Hillside development should minimize impacts on the natural, native environment and be sensitive to the impacts of development on the hillside. The following Design Guidelines apply to development within hillside areas of the City.

a. New structures and additions are strongly encouraged to be designed to relate to the existing topography and surroundings and minimize the structures mass and bulk.

   (i) Projects should be designed to avoid disturbing natural slopes and preserve existing open spaces and scenic views.

   (ii) Development should follow existing contours. (see fig. 9.a(ii)

fig. 9.a(ii)




b. Development on hillsides should have an adequate buffer from the peak of hilltops and other prominent natural features. (see fig. 9.b)

fig. 9.b


c. Grading and fill shall be minimized for hillside developments [Pleasant Hill Municipal Code (PHMC) Section 18.35.040.B].

d. Drainage patterns shall be preserved or improved to the greatest extent possible.

e. Hillside structures should be clustered together to provide maximum open space. (see fig. 9.e)

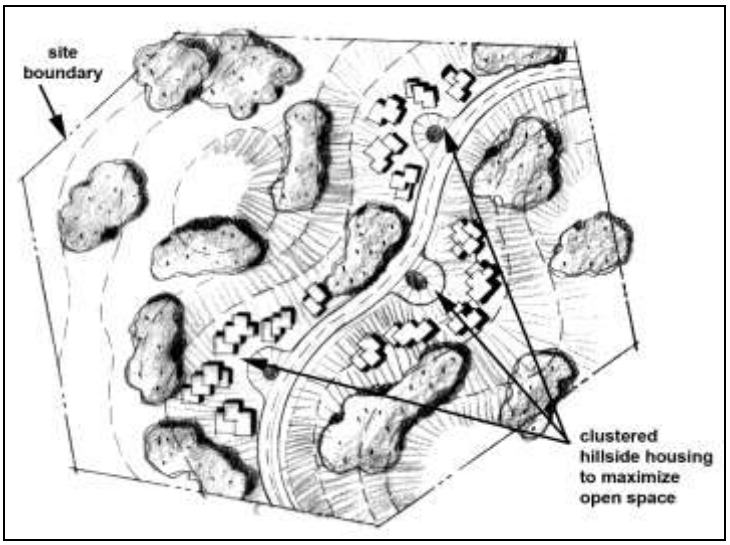



fig. 9.e

f. Landscaping shall be native and drought tolerant species (except immediately adjacent to residential structures, PHMC Section 18.35.050) and relate to the existing vegetation in the area.

g. To provide for better fire protection, landscape plans for properties in close proximity to open space areas should reflect the Contra Costa County Fire Protection District's Guidelines for "Defensible Space."

h. Use of fences should be minimized. When proposed, an open design is encouraged.

i. Use of retaining walls should be minimized with designs that are low in height and reduced in bulk and mass. The maximum height of retaining walls should be limited to 4 feet in height. If greater heights are needed, appropriately spaced terracing should be implemented in the design.

j. Use of colors in the hillside should be neutral without causing sharp contrast.

k. Use of exterior lighting in the hillside should be minimized.

   (i) Lighting should be minimized where possible and should only be used for safety reasons.

   (ii) Use alternative fixtures/luminares sources for illumination rather than typical street lights including pedestrian scale lighting where appropriate.

   (iii) Public street lighting fixtures shall be approved by the City prior to installation.

l. Use of pervious materials is encouraged to reduce surface runoff.

m. Building and landscape materials that reduce fire hazards should be used throughout hillside developments.

n. Utilities, transformers and other mechanical equipment shall be designed to be shielded from public views as per PHMC Section 18.50.090.

o. Larger land area is needed in the hillsides compared to comparable development in areas that are flat.

## *10. Environmental Sensitivity*

Building “green” is an environmentally responsible construction technique that continues to be accepted and demanded, not only in the region, but for the nation. Building responsibly provides benefits for people and the environment in the name of preservation of natural resource, reduced impacts on the environment, and long-term lower maintenance and utility costs.

a. Green Building Techniques

(i) Using landscape to reduce energy costs.

- Use of trees to cool buildings in the summer.
- Use of deciduous trees to take advantage of shade during the summer and allow the sun to shine through during winter months.
- Refer to the previous Landscape section for additional recommendations.

(ii) Using recycled materials, low energy bulbs and low flow fixtures, energy efficient appliances, windows, tankless water heaters, etc.

(iii) Recycle and reuse materials from the existing structure.

(iv) Using higher quality, long lasting materials that result in reduced maintenance and greater longevity.

(see fig. 10.a(iv)

fig. 10.a(iv)

(v) Implement advanced building techniques and materials, including some listed below:

- Use of web floor trusses.
- Consider the use of recycled steel material, rather than lumber.
- Use of structural insulated panels (SIP).
- Use engineered lumber.
- Use of cool roofs.

(vi) Installing attachments and pre-wiring for solar energy in new construction.

(vii) Ensure equipment used to harness the energy of the sun is located in the most opportune location to make use of the full extent of natural energy.

1. Trees should be sited to respect solar access to solar cell facilities.
2. Solar cells should be sited in positions that will allow the greatest extent of sunlight exposure. (see figs. 10.a(vii)1 and 10.a(vii)2)

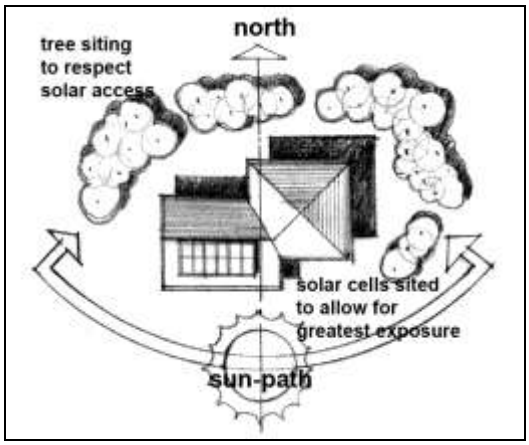



fig. 10.a(vii)1


fig. 10.a(vii)2

(i) Follow recommendations included in the United States Green Building Council for Green Building and encourage projects to be compatible with Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards.

b. Water Efficient Landscaping

(i) Protect and keep native soils and vegetation in its existing state to decrease the need to replant.

(ii) Reuse plant materials from the site if appropriate.

(iii) The use of native plants that requires less irrigation.

(iv) Use of irrigation systems that effectively use water resources.

(v) Provide for on-site water catchment/retention to reduce the need for water.

(vi) Use lighter colored paving materials and open grid paving systems.

- Use colors that reflect, rather than absorb heat.
- Consider decomposed granite or crushed rock instead of asphalt where appropriate.

# Multi-Family Residential

## B. Multi-Family Residential

Multi-Family residential uses include multiple dwelling units and include townhouses, condominiums and apartment complexes. The following Design Guidelines apply to multi-family residential uses.

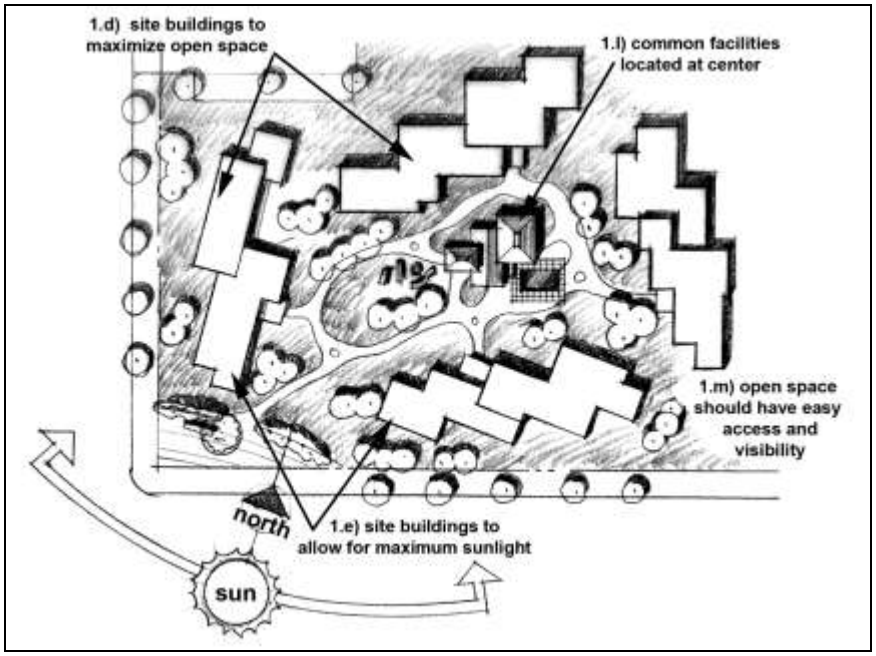
### *1. Site Planning*

Multi-family developments are characterized by higher density residential buildings comprised of attached units and common facilities such as parking, open space and recreation areas. Site planning includes managing the building's relationship to the street, placement of the buildings, location of common facilities, open space and parking. The following Design Guidelines apply to site planning for multi-family developments.

a. Setback patterns within the immediate vicinity should be maintained.

b. Buildings should be placed in a manner that maximizes solar access during cooler months and limits it during warmer months.

c. Buildings should be oriented to promote privacy to the greatest extent possible.




figs. 1.d,e,m

***(Graphics and Photos are provided for illustrative purposes only)***

d. Buildings should be sited to maximize areas for open space and common space areas. (see fig. 1.d,e,m)

e. Buildings, roadways, and parking shall be sited to preserve existing heritage, protected and mature trees subject to Pleasant Hill Municipal Code (PHMC) Section 18.50.110. (see fig. 1.d,e,m)

(i) Removal of existing heritage and protected trees shall be avoided except circumstances where the tree is dead or dying, poses a life/safety hazard, in cases that renders the site not developable, or in other exceptional cases as noted in PHMC Section 18.50.110).

(ii) Any loss of heritage and protected trees require an arborist report as part of the project request and shall be peer reviewed by the City.

(iii) Encroachment into existing tree canopies shall be minimized to the greatest extent possible.

(iv) Any encroachment into/beneath a tree canopy require an arborist report to ensure that new construction does not negatively impact the long-term survivability of the tree.

(v) Replacement of removed trees shall be replaced with quality species trees at a number that the site can reasonably accommodate. Native and indigenous trees should be replaced with like trees, while non-native trees may be replaced by a broader palette of tree species.

Trees are determined to be mature based on different standards including species, health, and age of tree.

f. Buildings and structures should be sited to allow maximum sunlight onto private and community open spaces.

g. Buildings should be sited so that sunlight directly enters each dwelling unit during some part of the day year round.

h. New buildings/structures should be sensitive to existing structures and minimize obstruction of existing outward views where possible.

i. Buildings should relate to the street and be located on the site to reinforce street frontages.

j. All building entries should be prominent and visible.

k. Uses should be buffered from incompatible development through the use of increased setbacks, fencing and landscape screening.

l. Vehicular gated projects are discouraged.

m. Common facilities should be centrally located on the project site. (see fig. 1.d,e,m)

n. Open space areas should have easy access and clear visibility.

o. Stormwater impacts need to be addressed in the early stages of project design as they often have an impact on site design.

p. ADA requirements need to be addressed in the early stages of project design as they often have an impact on site design.

(i) The project shall be designed to comply with current American with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements.

(ii) ADA requirements affect various project areas including common areas and most exterior areas.

q. Urban Creek Guidelines (A new creek setback ordinance is currently being developed by the City)

(i) A larger setback should be provided for structures when located near deeper creeks.

(ii) Development adjacent to creeks should minimize impacts to existing drainage facilities

- Proposed improvements should not diminish the capacity of the creek.
- Proposed improvements should not increase flooding potential.
- Runoff should be detained on-site prior to discharge into the creek
- Proposed improvements should not cause in increase in erosion or cause instability of the creek banks
- Outfalls to creeks should minimize creek erosion.

(iii) Development adjacent to creeks should minimize impacts to the riparian habitat

- Improvements should be kept away from riparian corridors.

(iv) Improvements within creeks should be limited to outfalls, infrastructure improvements, and landscaping approved by local, state and regional agencies.

(v) Creek stabilization should incorporate soil bio-engineering and plant-based methods.

(vi) Creek improvements should require minimal maintenance.

- Access for the maintenance and monitoring of creeks should be provided.

(vii) Improvements within creeks should be designed for longevity.

### *2. Scale and Mass*

The overall size, shape, scale and massing of a new building can impact the surrounding neighborhood. The overall form of a new building should incorporate as much variety as possible and avoid large expanses of flat wall or roof. Design techniques can be used to minimize the size of multi-family structures, in keeping with a small town feel.

a. Buildings should be articulated to help minimize the appearance of bulk and provide a more pedestrian scale. (see fig. 2.a)

fig. 2.a

b. Overall height of new structures should be in scale with other buildings in the neighborhood.

c. Height of buildings should be sensitive when locating adjacent to single story buildings.(see fig. 2.c)

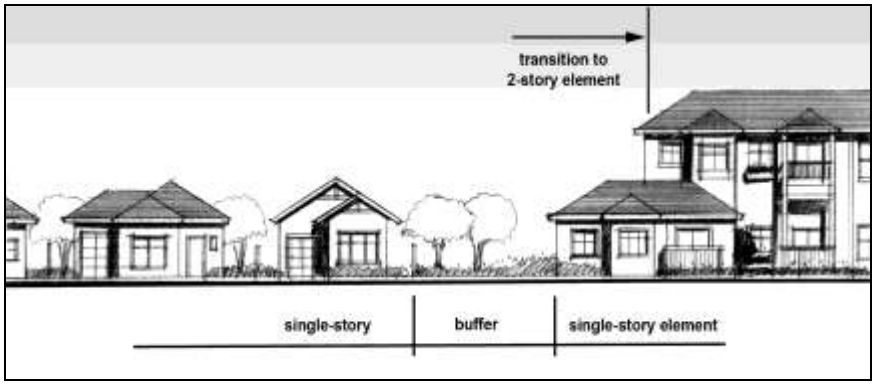



fig. 2.c

d. Facades of horizontal buildings should be broken into smaller components through use of vertical elements or recessing of the building.

e. Long rooflines should be broken up and provided with articulation. (see fig. 2.e)


fig. 2.e

### *3. Architecture/Appearance*

The following Design Guidelines are intended to promote a high-quality appearance of multi-family buildings.

a. New multi-family buildings should be designed pedestrian scale architecture, emphasizing the pedestrian entrance over the vehicular and stepping back multi-level buildings from the street, and visually breaking up facades into smaller components. (see figs. 3.a )

figs. 3.a

b. Designs should be visually appealing and include varied facades and pleasing exterior elevations.

(i) Special architectural treatment should occur at the ends/corners of buildings.

(See figs. 3.b(i))

figs. 3.b(i)

(ii) Structures should have varying height, color, setback, materials, texture, landscaping, trim and roof shape.

(iii) Facades should be varied and articulated to provide visual interest to the street and pedestrians.

c. Building materials and colors should be complementary to the surrounding area. Appropriate colors should be used to better blend with the surrounding area.

d. To help reduce the appearance of bulk, building body colors should be lighter than trim colors.

e. The use of foam for trim should be minimized and only used when natural materials are not feasible.

f. No building façade should consist of an unarticulated blank wall or an unbroken series of garage doors.

g. Windows should be recessed to the building façade to provide increased visual interest to the building.

h. The finished architecture should treat the whole structure and finish appropriately on all sides to provide continuity. (see fig. 3.h)


fig. 3.h

i. Windows should be appropriately sized, spaced and composed on the building

j. Architectural features (such as awnings, shutters and tile and metal elements) should be used on the exterior to provide increased visual interest to the building where appropriate. (See fig. 3.j)


fig. 3.j

k. Roof materials should relate to the design and architectural style of the building.

l. Plans submitted to the City should be prepared by a licensed professional.

### *4. Environmental Sensitivity*

Building “green” is an environmentally responsible construction technique that continues to be accepted and demanded, not only in the region, but for the nation. Building responsibly provides benefits for people and environment in the name of preservation of natural resource, reduced impacts on the environment, and long-term lower maintenance and utility costs.

a. Using landscape to reduce energy costs.
   (i) Use of trees to cool buildings in the summer.
   (ii) Use of deciduous trees to take advantage of shade during the summer and allow the sun to shine through during winter months.
   (iii) Refer to landscape section for additional landscape recommendations.

b. Using recycled materials, low wattage bulbs and low flow fixtures, energy efficient appliances, windows, tankless water heaters, etc.

c. Recycle and reuse materials from the existing structure.

d. Using higher quality, long lasting materials that result in reduced maintenance and the need to use new materials less frequently.

e. Quality Insulation in buildings can better moderate inside temperatures.

f. Implement advanced building materials and techniques, including some listed below:
   (i) Use of advanced framing design.
   (ii) Consider the use of recycled steel material, rather than lumber
   (iii) Use of structural insulated panels (SIP).
   (iv) Use engineered lumber.
   (v) Use of cool roofs. (see figs. 4.f (v))


figs. 4.f (v)


g. Installing attachments and pre-wiring for solar energy in new construction.

h. Ensure equipment used to harness the sun is located in the most opportune location to make use of the full extent of natural energy.

(i) Trees should be sited to respect solar access to photovoltaic (PV) facilities.

(ii) Solar cells should be sited in positions that will allow the greatest extent of sunlight exposure. (see fig. 4.h (ii))

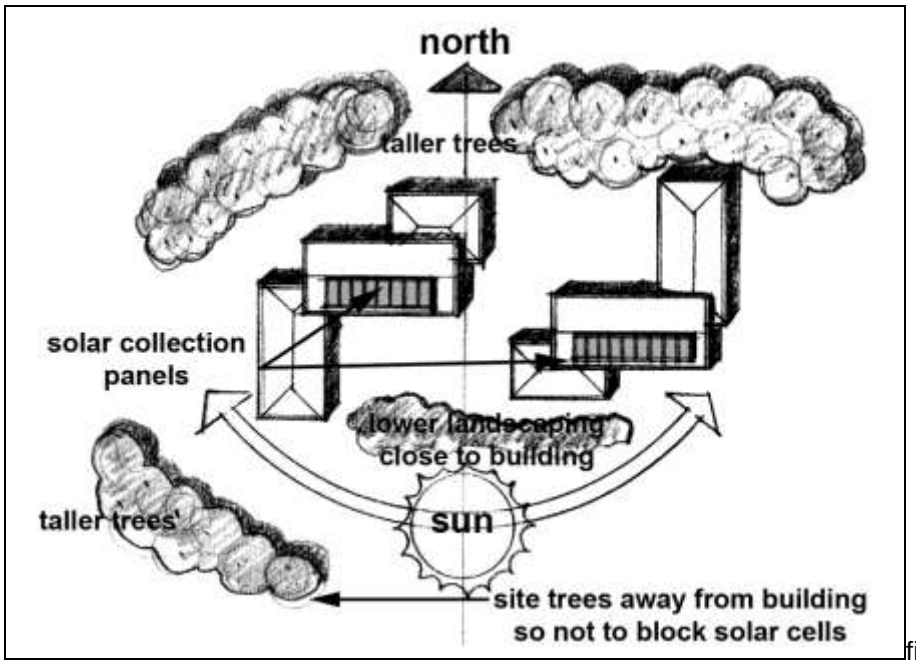


fig. 4.h(ii)

i. Follow recommendations included in the United States Green Building Council for Green Building and encourage projects to be compatible with Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards.

j. Achieve “ENERGY STAR” certification through the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE).

k. Water Efficient Landscaping

(i) Minimize disruption to existing native soils and vegetation to decrease the need to replant.

(ii) Reuse plant materials from the site if appropriate.

(iii) The use of native plants that requires less irrigation.

(iv) Use of irrigation systems that effectively use water resources.

(v) Provide for on-site water catchment/retention to reduce the need for water.

l. Provide shade at hardscape areas (see fig. 4.l)

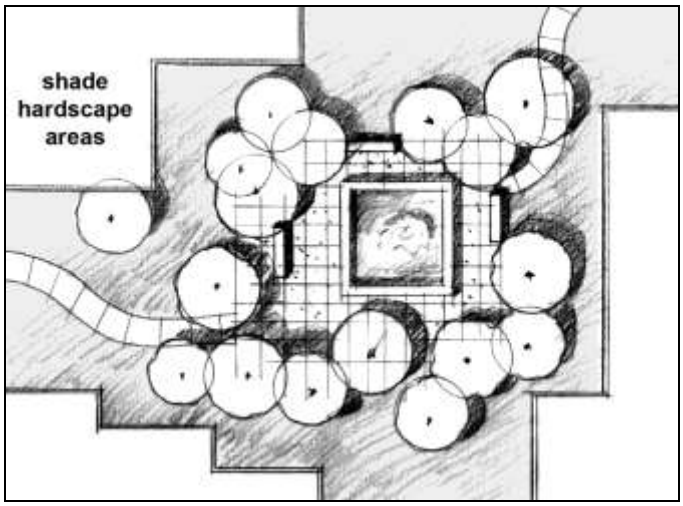



fig. 4.l

m. Use less paving, lighter colored paving materials, and open grid paving systems.

(i) Use colors that reflect, rather than absorb heat.

(ii) Consider decomposed granite or crushed rock instead of asphalt where appropriate.

### *5. Private Open Space*

A major component of multi-family developments is private open space. Private open spaces are areas that are connected to multi-family units and usually are defined as patios, balconies and decks. They are especially important since residents of multi-family developments do not have a yard or other open spaces that are common with single-family residences. Private open space areas should be usable and in areas that will have an appropriate level of privacy.

Common storage needs are often overlooked, yet storage areas can be critical in making private open space work for residents. The following Design Guidelines are to be used for private open space.

a. Well designed and adequately sized private open spaces shall be provided for each unit [Pleasant Hill Municipal Code (PHMC) Section 18.20.040.E]. (see fig. 5.a,b,c)

b. Each unit should have some amount of private open space. (see fig. 5.a,b,c)

c. Private open space should be easily accessible from individual units. (see fig. 5.a,b,c)

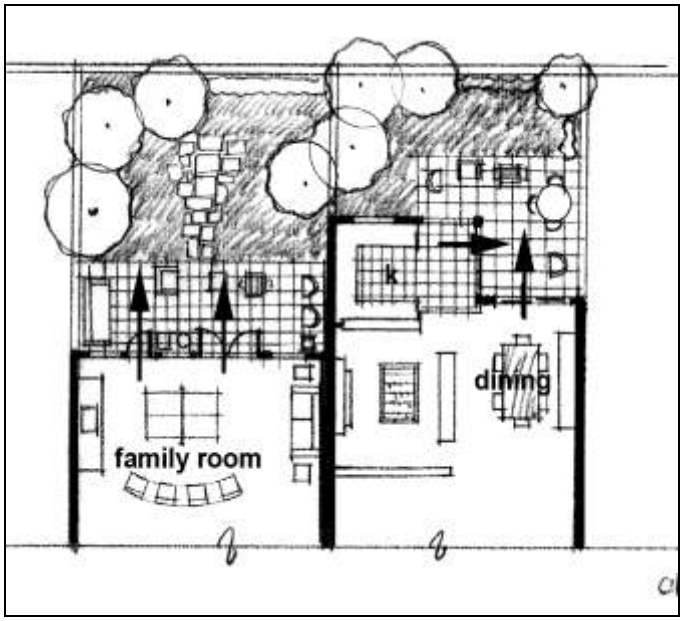



fig. 5.a,b,c

d. Balcony walls should be designed to allow outward visibility.

e. Fencing and walls should be provided to define private open spaces and to enhance security and privacy.

f. Design and orientation of open space areas should provide shelter to noise and traffic of adjacent streets or other uses.

### *6. Common Open Space / Amenities*

Shared outdoor area and amenities are intended for use by all residents and should be created with this in mind. Such areas should have easy access from any dwelling unit in the project and should include clear boundaries so that residents and visitors understand what is common and what is private. These areas should be designed for use at night as well as during the day. The following Design Guidelines apply to the design of common open space and amenities.

a. Common open space and amenities should have access from any dwelling unit in the project.

b. The amount of space and amenities should be larger in size and quantity in proportion to the size of the project.

c. Open spaces should be provided as large components rather than unusable fragments. (see fig. 6.c)

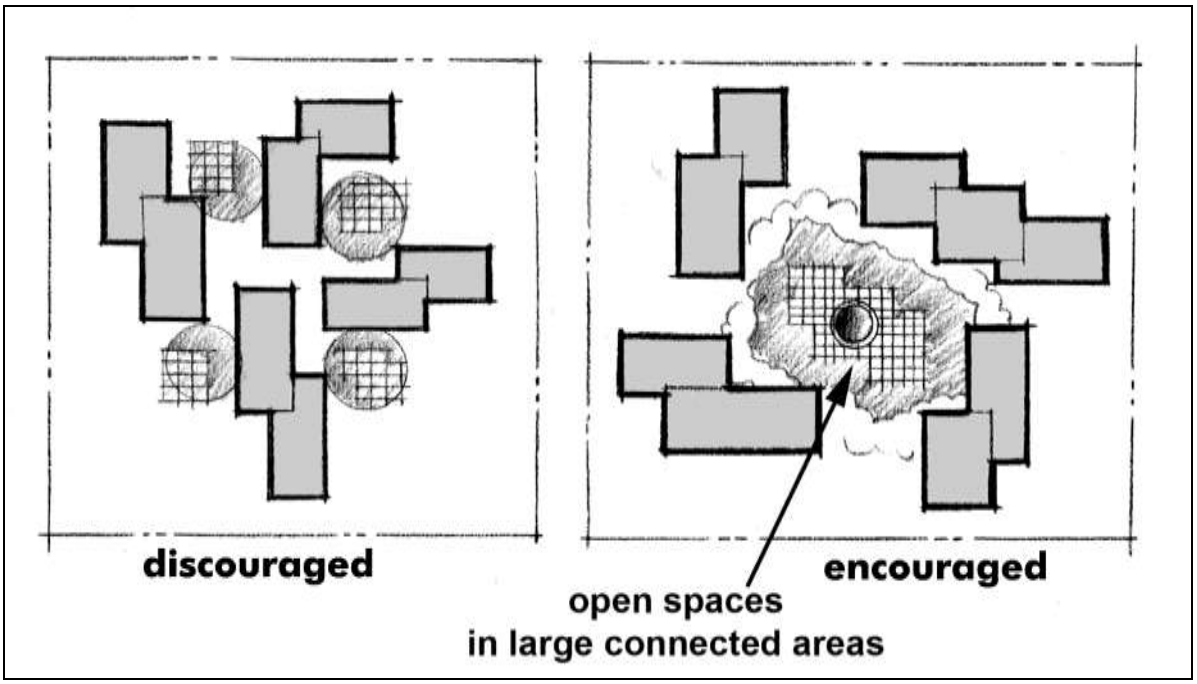



fig. 6.c

d. Open space areas should be designed to take advantage of sunlight and open air.

e. Projects should provide common amenities to enhance the livability of the project, including, but not limited to pools, exercise rooms, play facilities, and community rooms.

f. Play areas should be centrally located, and designed in a manner that allows for adult supervision and child safety.

## *7. Landscaping*

Landscaping is a critical component that complements good architectural design to create a finished product. A variety of plantings should be selected and provided appropriately for their intended use. The following Design Guidelines apply to landscape design.

a. Landscaping should be used as a unifying element within a project to obtain a cohesive appearance and to help achieve compatibility of a new project with its surroundings (see figs. 7.a, 7.b).

b. Landscaping should be used to complement good design, not hide substandard architecture. (see figs. 7.a, 7.b)


figs. 7.a,b


c. Select landscape materials and plants that are appropriate in scale and function with the site and for the site conditions.

d. Landscape should generally have a logical tiered system.

e. Heritage and protected trees shall be preserved for the community's enjoyment to the greatest extent possible.

   (i) Heritage trees are defined as any tree in the City with a trunk diameter of 16 inches or more or any tree grouping in the City with at least one tree of this diameter. [as per Pleasant Hill Municipal Code (PHMC) Section 18.50.110.E].

   (ii) Protected trees are identified as a native or indigenous tree with a trunk diameter 12 inches or greater at a height of 2 feet from the ground, or any non-native tree with a trunk diameter greater than 24 inches at a height of 2 feet from the ground (as per PHMC Section 18.50.110.A).

f. Existing, mature trees shall be preserved to the greatest extent possible and incorporated within the overall landscaping plan.

   (i) New structures shall be designed to not impact existing mature trees to the greatest extent possible.

   (ii) Arborist reports shall be provided for new development with existing heritage and protected trees at the site.

   (iii) Any loss of mature trees require an arborist report as part of the project request and shall be peer reviewed for accuracy by the City.

   (iv) Incorporate tree protection measures to save heritage and protected sized trees.

   (v) Incorporate designs that ensure the long-term longevity of trees.

g. Provide landscaping that supports solar gains. (see fig. 7.g)

   (i) Providing shade trees to help cool buildings during summer months.

   (ii) Planting deciduous trees 20'-40" apart on the south and west sides of buildings to shade during the summer and allow sunlight through during winter months.

   (iii) Use 1/3 evergreen trees for winter structure and variety.

   (iv) Trees should be sited to respect solar access to photovoltaic (PV) facilities.

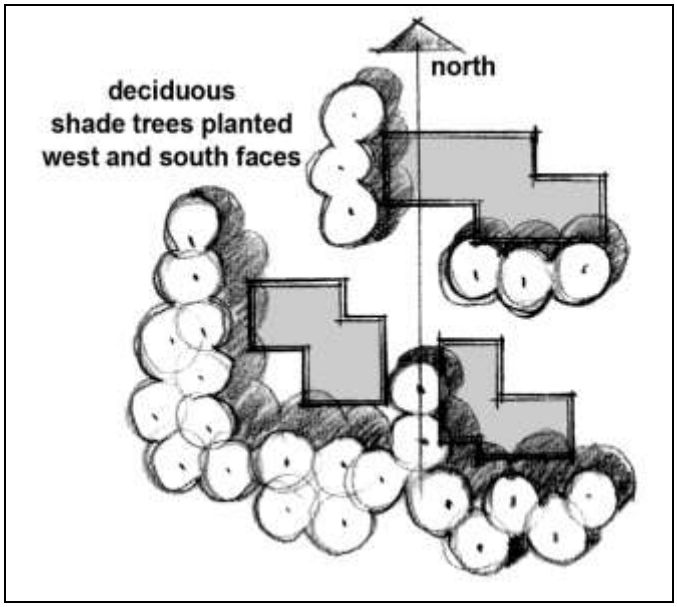


fig. 7.g

h. Hardscape areas should be naturally shaded

i. Landscaping should be incorporated into projects to create an inviting and comfortable environment for residents. (see fig. 7.i)

fig. 7.i

j. Landscaping should avoid creating a green wall of vegetation (typically greater than three feet in height) at the front yard.

k. Landscape and hardscape elements should define useful public and private spaces. (see fig. 7.k)

fig. 7.k

l. Seating options in landscaped areas should be provided.

m. Visual focal points such as fountains, sculpture, and art are strongly encouraged to be integrated into landscaping. (see fig. 7.m)

fig. 7.m

n. Walls in alleys abutting residential uses should be screened with landscaping such as clinging vines. Landscape areas adjacent and between garages in alley-loaded residential areas are encouraged. (see fig. 7.n)

fig. 7.n

o. Up-lighting should be provided to highlight and accentuate special or significant landscape elements.

p. Vines and climbing plants integrated upon buildings, trellises and perimeter walls are encouraged.

q. Structural soil should be used in planting areas that are small and constrained.

r. Landscaping should be protected from vehicular and pedestrian encroachment through the use of curbs and raised planting surfaces.

s. Plant material should be sited to respect lighting and allow emergency apparatus access. Trees and large shrubs should be sited to avoid potential damage to overhead lines or underground facilities

t. Utilize landscaping to provide screening of above ground equipment, trash facilities and parking lots.

(i) Where possible, air conditioning and mechanical equipment should be located on the north and east sides to minimize stress during warmer months.

u. Vines and climbing plants integrated upon buildings, trellises and perimeter walls are encouraged. (see fig. 7.u)

fig. 7.u

v. When selecting plant materials, the following Design Guidelines should be followed:

(i) When replacing existing mature trees, new trees should be 36-48 inch box size to quickly replace the lost tree canopy or smaller trees should be planted in numbers that replace the lost tree canopy.

(ii) Trees species and sizes should be selected that best fits the planting areas.

(iii) Shrubs species and sizes should be selected that best fits the planting environment.

(iv) Ground cover should be planted using spacing and sizes that will accomplish ground coverage within a short amount of time.

w. To provide for better fire protection, landscape plans for properties in close proximity to open space areas should reflect the Contra Costa County Fire Protection District's Guidelines for "Defensible Space."

x. Encourage the use of alternative sources of water (rainwater, recycled) where possible for irrigation.

y. Landscaping shall emphasize native and water-efficient plants.

z. Irrigation

(i) Automatic sprinkler controls with rain sensors should be installed to ensure that landscape areas would be watered adequately.

(ii) Sprinkler heads and risers should be protected from dogs, movers, gardeners, and car bumpers. Pop-up heads should be used near curbs and sidewalks.

(iii) The landscape irrigation system should be designed to prevent run-off and overspray.

(iv) Irrigation should use drip and low flow systems to minimize use of water.

aa. To ensure successful and attractive landscaping on multi-family sites, landscape plans shall be prepared by a landscape designer, licensed landscape architect or other qualified professional.

### *8. Fences and Walls*

Fences and walls are used to demarcate private space and public space, while creating visual openness and visual interest. The following are Design Guidelines for fences and walls.

a. The design of fences and walls should be architecturally compatible with the primary structures.

b. Walls with public views should be decorative, include vertical elements, and change in elevation. (see fig. 8.b)

fig. 8.b

c. Solid walls and fences are discouraged unless used to demarcate private spaces, separate from adjacent uses, or provide sound separation from busy streets.

## *9. Lighting*

Lighting can serve dual purposes. To enhance the appearance of the project when the sun goes down and also to provide safety and security. However, lighting can also be intrusive to neighbors and residents as well as to the neighborhood when too bright or inappropriately directed.

a. Lighting levels should be minimized to preserve the night (dark) sky.

b. Light fixture design should be compatible and relate to the design and the use of the principal structure on the site.

   (i) Pedestrian, vehicular and wall lighting fixtures should complement each other and the architecture of the building.

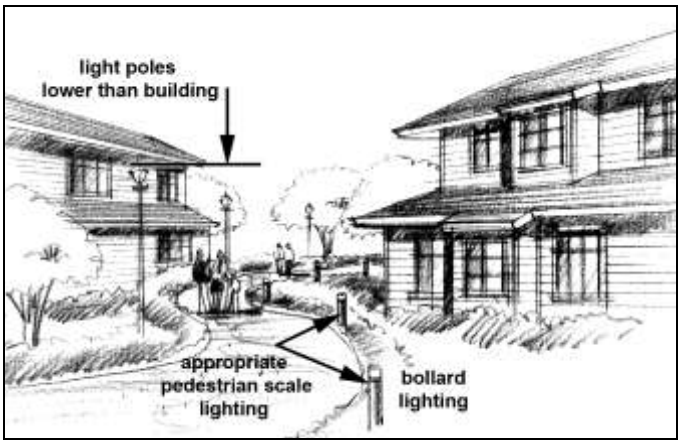
   (ii) Light fixtures should complement the main structures and not attract attention.

c. Lighting plans should be designed in conjunction with the landscape plan.

d. Height of the light poles should be appropriate for the project and the surrounding environment.

   (i) As a general rule, the height of the light poles should be lower than the main building height. (see fig. 9.d(i, ii))

   (ii) Pedestrian scale lighting should be appropriate to the setting (see fig. 9.d (i, ii)




figs. 9.d(i,ii)

e. Parking lot lighting should be in scale with the project, yet provide adequate lighting for safety and visibility purposes.

f. Shield light sources to prevent any glare or direct illumination on adjacent properties. (see fig. 9.f)

g. Wall pack glare should be shielded and minimized.

h. All pedestrian and vehicular areas shall be well-lit for safety and security.

i. Subtle illumination to enhance the architectural form of a building is encouraged.

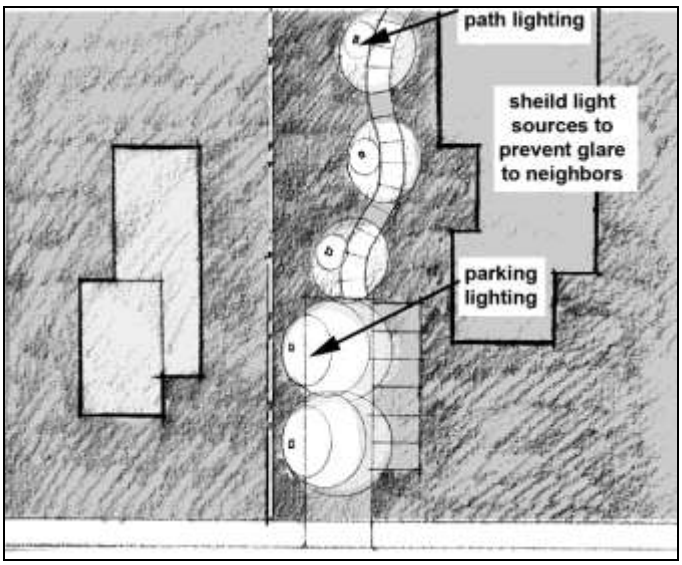



fig. 9.f

### *10. Circulation*

On-site circulation is provided to connect residents to common facilities, such as parking lots, amenities, other dwelling units and to points outside the project. Vehicular circulation is important to minimize conflicts between pedestrian and vehicular uses and to minimize the amount of paving in projects. The following are Design Guidelines for on-site circulation.

a. Vehicular

(i) Site access and internal circulation should promote safety, efficiency and convenience. Conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians should be avoided.

(ii) Continuous circulation is encouraged, with dead-end driveways minimized.

(iii) Site access points should be minimized and located as far as possible from street intersections.

(iv) Decorative pavement should be used at entries.

(v) In the isolated instances that security gates are incorporated into a project, adequate queuing space shall be provided to prevent blockage of adjacent streets.

(vi) Parking lot design shall conform to standards identified in the Zoning Ordinance [Pleasant Hill Municipal Code (PHMC) Chapter 18.55].

b. Pedestrian

(i) Facilitate pedestrian access and circulation. Entry design should incorporate sidewalks on both sides of the driveway.

(ii) Direct access from public streets should be provided to entries. (see fig. 10.b (ii))

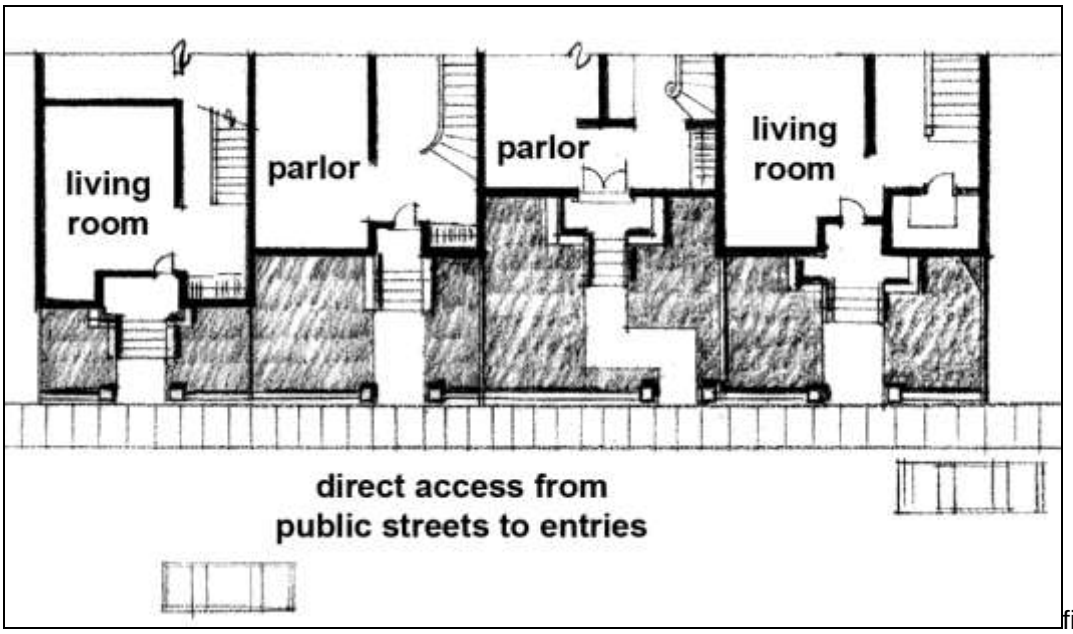


fig. 10.b (ii)

(iii) Access is encouraged to adjacent uses.

(iv) When in close proximity to trails and other established pedestrian paths, direct access should be provided.

(v) Pedestrian walkways should be safe, visually attractive, and well defined by landscaping and lights. Use of decorative pavement is encouraged in hardscape areas, at a minimum it should be used to delineate crossings. (see fig. 10.b (v))


fig. 10.b (v)

(vi) Walkways should be at least 4 feet clear in width.

(vii) Circulation shall take into account ADA requirements in the early stages of project design.

### *11. Parking*

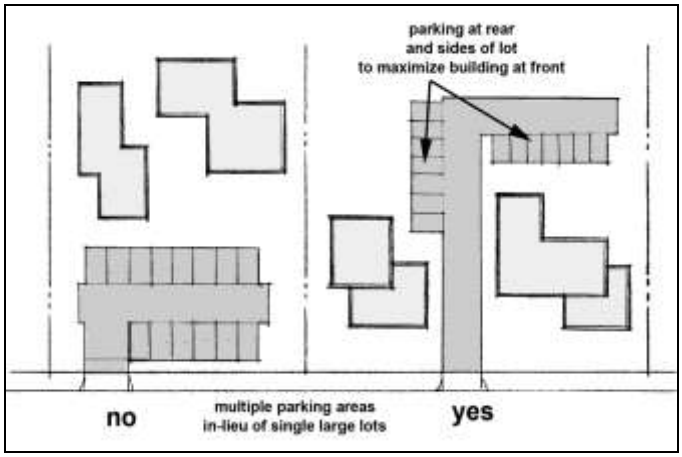
Parking is an important issue that needs to be properly addressed in multi-family housing development. Large parking spaces can dominate a site and consume open space possibilities, however, it is needed in adequate amounts as part of a successful development. Parking areas should be safe and secure and allow easy access from housing units.

a. Parking areas should be well-designed and safe, located away from public views.

b. Parking lots should be sited at the rear or side of the site to allow a majority of the dwelling units to front the street. (see fig. 11.b)

c. Garages/carports should be architecturally integrated with the main building and be architecturally consistent with the style/design.

d. Multiple small parking lots should be built in-lieu of one large lot. (see fig. 11.d)




figs. 11.b,d

e. When parking lots are along the street frontage, it should be screened with landscaping.

   (i) Trees and shrubs shall be planted to soften the impact of parking areas and provide shade for parking to the greatest extent possible.

   (see fig. 11.e (i))


fig. 11.e (i)

f. Perimeter landscaping shall be provided around parking lots as per Pleasant Hill Municipal Code (PHMC) Section 19.50.140.

g. Trees shall be provided to allow for 50% canopy coverage of parking lots at tree maturity to the greatest extent possible.

   (see fig. 11.g)

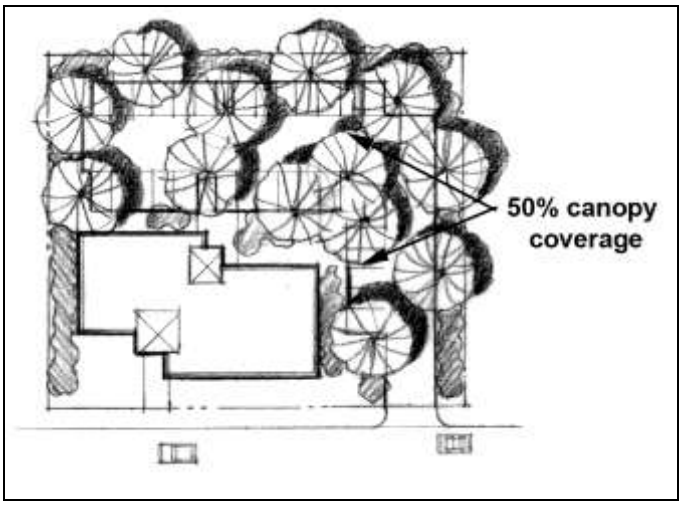



fig. 11.g

h. Landscape islands shall be a minimum of four feet wide to allow adequate spacing for trees. (PHMC 18.55.140.C)

i. Trees should be located to avoid contact with vehicle overhang and car doors

j. When parking structures are proposed, blank and unarticulated walls should be avoided or decorated with artwork and/or vegetation.

   (see fig. 11.j)


fig. 11.j

k. Parking lots should be sited in proximity to dwelling units to allow for casual surveillance.

l. The number of driveways should be minimized and located an adequate, safe distance from street corners.

m. Driveway entrances (from streets) should receive special landscape and paving treatments to break up paving expanses and to define the site entrance. (see fig. 11.m)


fig. 11.m

n. Parking spaces off of main vehicular entryways should be at least one car length away from the street to allow safe ingress and egress for the first parking space.

o. ADA parking spaces shall comply with current requirements.

p. Parking lots should be drained to landscape or other filtering solutions to minimize polluted runoff.

### *12. Service Facilities and Utilities*

An important part of multi-family residential projects that is often overlooked is the siting of service facilities and utilities. They should not be treated as after thoughts, but should be designed to enhance or at least not negatively impact the overall site plan. The following are Design Guidelines related to service facilities and utilities.

a. Locate service facilities and drives away from public streets and nearby residential uses. Place service uses in the least visible areas.

b. Provide access for service vehicles and separate from other on-site circulation patterns when possible.

c. Fully screen all service facilities from the public street and adjoining properties. Screening should match the design and material of the main building.

d. When new transformers are required within public views and within the front yard setback, they should be undergrounded. In all other locations it shall be screened from views [Pleasant Hill Municipal Code (PHMC) Section 18.50.090]. (see fig. 12.d)

fig. 12.d

e. Mechanical Equipment

(i) Mechanical equipment should be sited in side and rear yard areas of the project, hidden from public views.

(ii) Locate mechanical equipment away from on-site and adjacent uses to not cause noise problems.

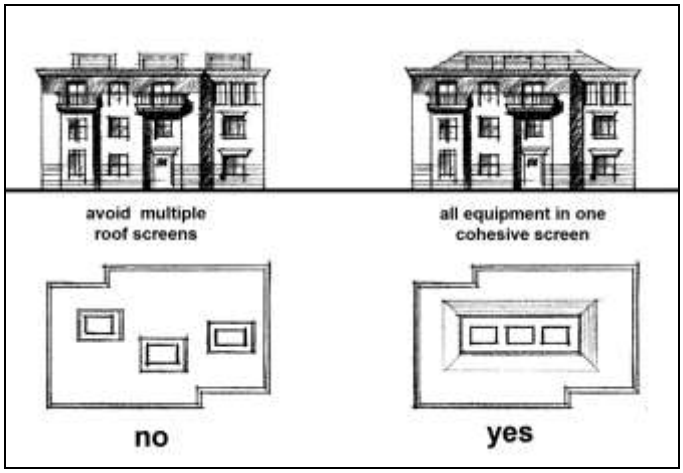
(iii) Fully screen roof top equipment from public views as per PHMC Section 18.50.090. (see fig. 12.e(iii,iv,v))

(iv) Screening for roof top equipment should use architecture that matches the overall building design.

(see fig. 12.e(iii,iv,v))

(v) Avoid multiple roof screens; all equipment should be within one cohesive screen.

(see fig. 12.e(iii.iv,v))




figs. 12.e (iii,iv,v)

f. Trash Facilities

(i) All multi-family projects shall provide for adequate storage of trash and recyclable materials in enclosed areas (PHMC Section 18.50.070).

(ii) Trash enclosures should be conveniently accessible by collection trucks.

(iii) Enclosures should be in rear and side yards.

(iv) Provide a pad durable enough (i.e. reinforced concrete pad, reinforced paving) to withstand garbage collection activities in front of and within enclosures.

(v) Enclosures should be located within close proximity (within 300 feet) of each unit for user convenience.

(vi) Trash enclosures shall screen trash containers on all 4 sides to the full height of the container (PHMC Section 18.50.070).

(vii) The style, material and color of enclosures should be similar to those of the main structure. (see fig. 12.f (vii)


fig. 12.f (vii)

### *13. Public Improvements*

When a new project is proposed within the City, it can be reasonably expected that construction will also occur within public property (roads, easements, trails, etc.). When this occurs the private developer is responsible to repair any damage. It is also the expectation that improvements will occur along all frontages related to the project boundaries and any relevant areas that will be impacted by the proposed development.

a. All public property that fronts a project shall be improved to current standards.
   (i) Improvements include streets, sidewalks and landscaping.
   (ii) ADA improvements are required.
   (iii) Street widening may occur when deemed appropriate for an area.
   (iv) New lighting and signage may also be required.
b. Improvements can be required further away from the project site.
   (i) Lane widening to accommodate traffic increases.
   (ii) A new or modified traffic signal at nearby intersections.

### *14. Signage*

Please see the City Sign Design Guidelines section contained in the Non-Residential Design Guidelines for further guidance in regards to signs.

## C. Drainage and Stormwater Requirements

The City of Pleasant Hill has various creeks that run through the City limits. Because of this, large portions of the City are susceptible to flooding during the rainy season. The flooding threat can be minimized by designing projects that allow rainfall to absorb back into the ground rather than rolling off of impervious surfaces. In addition, recent requirements by the State have made the reduction of stormwater runoff and polluted runoff a priority for development projects. This helps to reduce flooding impacts as well as keeping water that flows into environmentally sensitive areas as clean as possible. The following are Design Guidelines with regard to drainage and stormwater runoff.

### *1. Drainage Design Guidelines*

a. Development and redevelopment projects shall incorporate drainage elements in site design as per the Subdivision Ordinance, National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit, Pleasant Hill Municipal Code (PHMC) Section 15.05 Stormwater Management and Drainage Requirements, and Public Works Standards.

   (i) Proposals should consider existing topography, soil types, existing drainage pattern, and creeks.

   (ii) Drainage facilities should be low maintenance.

b. Projects should be designed to minimize impervious surfaces, allowing infiltration of stormwater.

   (i) Pervious pavement materials should be considered. Turf block, gravel, unit pavers, porous asphalt and pervious concrete are encouraged.

   (ii) Shared driveways and reduced width should be considered.

c. Projects should maximize and preserve existing open space. Development layouts should be clustered or arranged to maximize open space.

d. Projects should incorporate landscape elements to reduce pollution from urban runoff.

   (i) Runoff should be routed into landscaped areas for treatment and detention.

   (see fig. 1.d (i,ii))

   (ii) Landscaped areas should incorporate appropriate species. (see fig. 1.d (i,ii))

   (iii) Irrigation should be efficient

fig. 1.d (i,ii)

e. Miscellaneous site considerations

(i) Refuse areas should be located away from roofs and inlets, and should be covered or screened.

(ii) Medians should be level or concave to contain and capture runoff (see fig. 1.e (ii)).

f. Drainage facilities should be integrated into landscaping, but also be identifiable.

(i) Dry swales and infiltration planters should be lined or covered with cobbles that blend in with the landscape.

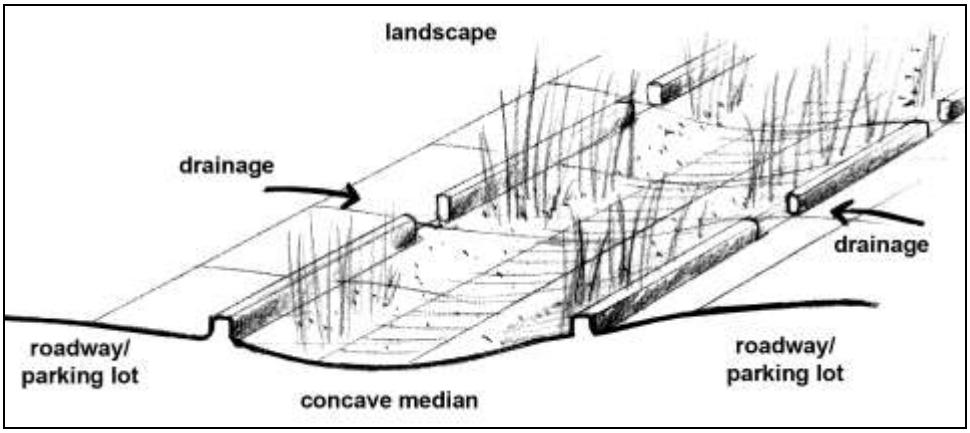



Fig. 1.e(ii)

# Streetscape and Gateways

# III. STREETSCAPE AND GATEWAYS

## A. Streetscape

Streets are an integral part of any community and play a role in the appearance of a City. Streets serve many purposes including connecting people and places, providing buffers between uses, serving as an exercise tool for bikers and joggers. Streets play an important role to strengthening neighborhood interaction and livability.

Streets can be a benefit as mentioned above and can also be a detriment by bringing traffic, air pollution, and congestion to a city. To ensure that the streets of Pleasant Hill continue to be an asset to the City, the following Streetscape Guidelines will help to maintain and improve streets.

***1. Scenic Corridor / Routes*** – *As designated within the City of Pleasant Hill General Plan*

a. Maintain a 50-foot setback for new development

b. Encourage development/improvements that enhance the scenery of the area.

(i) Encourage landscaping that is appropriate to the planting area without radically altering the existing vegetation.

(ii) Encourage landscaping that reflects the natural history and culture of the area and Pleasant Hill in general.

c. Support improvements that enhance the scenery and open vistas along scenic corridors.

***2. Arterial Streets***

a. Arterial streets carry the bulk of traffic through the City. Arterials provide direct service to major traffic generators and connect to the freeway system. Arterials typically have higher speeds and because of the traffic loads are often susceptible to traffic and congestion. Arterials mainly serve vehicles, however, alternative modes of transportation can be thoughtfully integrated with design while not impacting traffic flow.

b. To maintain existing flow of traffic, additional ingress and egress points are discouraged.

c. Bus turnouts should be provided to maintain efficiency of arterial streets. (see fig. 2.c)

d. Traffic light signals should be synchronized.

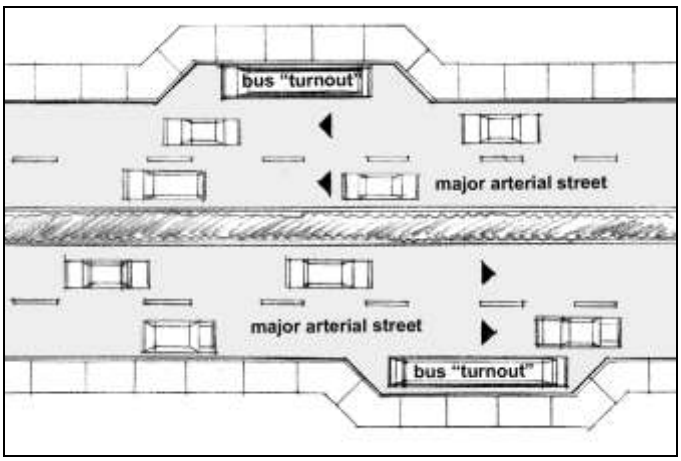



fig. 2.c

***(Graphics and Photos are provided for illustrative purposes only)***

e. Adequate buffers between sidewalks and roadways should be maintained through a four-foot landscape strip between the street and sidewalk.

f. Wide medians should be provided as space allows.

(i) Medians should consist of more than paint striping.

(see fig. 2.f (i))


fig. 2.f (i)

### *3. Collector Streets*

a. Collector streets are used as connectors between arterial streets that serve the City in general and local streets that serve neighborhoods. Collector streets connect adjacent neighborhoods and carry through-traffic city-wide.

b. Alternative modes of transportation should be thoughtfully integrated and designed within collector streets.

c. Landscaping should be integrated along collectors especially when located within residential areas. (see fig. 3.c)

d. Larger street setbacks should be incorporated along collector streets.


fig. 3.c

### *4. Local Streets*

a. Local streets are an integral component of neighborhoods and function primarily to provide access to destinations both inside and outside the neighborhood. Local streets should function to serve multiple modes of transportation including vehicle, pedestrian, bicycle and other alternative modes of transportation. Local streets should be designed for use mainly by the neighborhood and encourage reduced speeds, rather than allow for high traffic speeds, congestion and short cuts to get from one point to another.

b. When improvements at a site occur, new sidewalks shall be provided to create a safer and better pedestrian network throughout neighborhoods as per Public Works Standards.

c. Street trees should be incorporated when sidewalks are rebuilt or added to a site.

d. Streetlights should be minimized on local streets, however, should be used when addressing safety concerns.

### *5. General Streetscape Guidelines*

a. Street Trees

(i) Street trees should be of a species without intrusive roots and consume minimal amounts of water. In addition, street trees should be appropriate for their location. If the tree is to be located in a tight median, the tree selected should be smaller.

(ii) When planting street trees, the minimum size should be 24 inch box.

- Smaller sizes may be appropriate in small or tight planting areas or when availability issues arise.

b. Sidewalks

(i) Sidewalks located on wider streets should be separated from the roadway with a landscape strip.

(see fig. 5.b (i))

(ii) New sidewalks installed at infill locations should match the existing sidewalks in the immediate area.

c. Current and relevant ADA requirements shall be satisfied with every project.

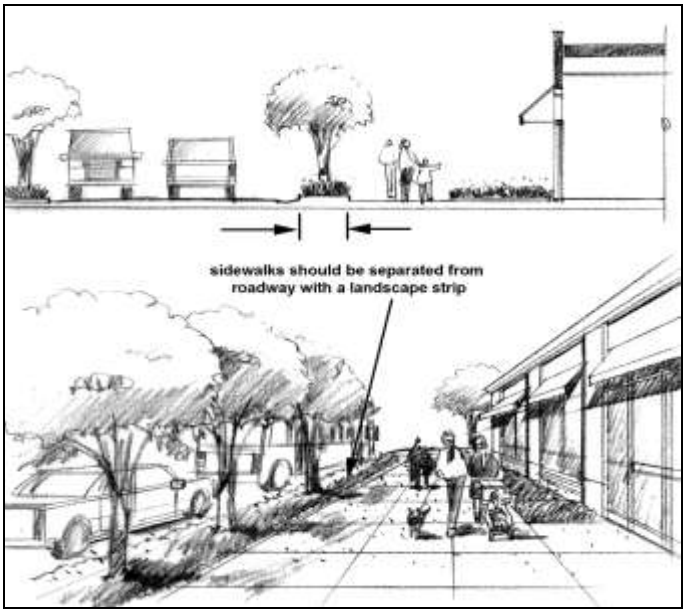



fig. 5.b (i)

## B. Gateways

Gateways are visual design features that allow residents and visitors to recognize when one is entering a special place or area. Well-designed gateways help to establish, strengthen, and provide an identity to the City and will help to identify when someone is in the City of Pleasant Hill. The City of Pleasant Hill currently has gateway treatments at certain locations in the City.

1. City identification signs should represent the City of Pleasant Hill - its history and present.
2. Gateway treatments should represent the identity of the City of Pleasant Hill on arterial streets and on major trails that enter and exit the City.
3. City gateways should use appropriate signage, landscaping, artwork, architectural features, and appropriate scale.
4. Sites at prominent gateway locations should provide additional landscape treatments and design amenities (including artwork) to help identify the transition into the City.
5. Utilities should be under-grounded to not detract from prominent gateway locations.
6. City designed projects should implement additional gateways features at prominent locations that help to create a sense of entry into the City.
7. When near gateways, service yards, storage areas and parking lots should be screened.

# Appendix

RESOLUTION NO. 08-08

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PLEASANT HILL ADOPTING CITY-WIDE DESIGN GUIDELINES

WHEREAS, the City of Pleasant Hill City Council identified the completion and implementation of City-Wide Design Guidelines as part of its "2006 Annual Goal Setting Session"; and

WHEREAS, the City of Pleasant Hill General Plan contains goals, policies, and programs that provide direction for the creation of City-Wide Design Guidelines; and

WHEREAS, Pleasant Hill Municipal Code Section 18.60.090 requires Sign Design Guidelines be completed; and

WHEREAS, as identified as part of the "2006 Annual Goal Setting Session", there is a need for design guidelines to assist design professionals, property owners, homeowners, and businesses when preparing design and land use applications; and

WHEREAS, City staff has proposed City-Wide Design Guidelines applicable in all zoning districts throughout the City; and

WHEREAS, the City Council, Planning Commission and Architectural Review Commission held a joint study session on the subject of City -Wide Design Guidelines on June 19, 2006; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission and Architectural Review Commission held joint study sessions on the subject of City-Wide Design Guidelines on June 27, 2006 and February 13, 2007; and

WHEREAS, the Architectural Review Commission considered the subject of City-Wide Design Guidelines at study sessions and at its meetings held on January 5, 2006, April 19, 2007, May 17, 2007, August 2, 2007, August 16, 2007; and

WHEREAS, the Architectural Review Commission considered and recommended adoption of City-Wide Design Guidelines by the City Council at its meeting of September 6th, 2007; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission considered and recommended adoption of City-Wide Design Guidelines at its meeting of September 11, 2007; and

WHEREAS, after notice thereof having been duly, regularly and lawfully given, public hearings on the proposed City-Wide Design Guidelines were held by the City Council on October 1, 2007, November 19, 2007, December 17, 2007, and February 4, 2008, where all

interested persons might appear and be heard;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Pleasant Hill adopts the attached City-Wide Design Guidelines based on the following findings:

1. The City-Wide Design Guidelines will preserve and enhance residential neighborhoods.

2. The City-Wide Design Guidelines will promote variety, excellence and compatibility with existing development for new non-residential development.

3. The City-Wide Design Guidelines will improve the general appearance of the City by providing design recommendations for projects that reflect the design preferences of the City.

4. The City-Wide Design Guidelines are in conformance with and consistent with the City's General Plan and Zoning Ordinance.

ADOPTED by the City Council of the City of Pleasant Hill at a regular meeting of the Council held on the 4th day of February, 2008, by the following vote:

AYES: Angeli, Durant, Williamson, Hanecak
NOES: None
ABSENT: Harris
ABSTAIN: None

JOHN HANECAK, Mayor

ATTEST:

MARTY C. McINTURF, City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

DEBRA S. MARGOLIS, City Attorney

CERTIFIED A TRUE COPY

DEPUTY CITY CLERK, CITY OF PLEASANT HILL

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# V. INDEX

# VI. CREDITS

The City of Pleasant Hill would like to thank the following for their time and efforts on this document in addition to all community members who provided valuable input.

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Councilmember Michael G. Harris
Councilmember Terri Williamson

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Vice-Chairperson Lola Fellinger
Commissioner Robert Abbott
Commissioner James Bonato
Commissioner Ken Lombardi
Commissioner Dave Mascaro
Commissioner Diana Vavrek

**Architectural Review Commission**
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Vice-Chairperson John Hart
Commissioner George Corrigan
Commissioner Pamela Simonds
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